



SUMMERVILLE UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Governance Handbook 2017-2018

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Summerville Union HSD
Governance Handbook
2017-2018

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ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Governance – A Definition

School district governance is the act of transforming the needs, wishes and desires of the community into policies that direct the community's schools.

Four Dimensions of Effective Governance

There are four dimensions to the effective governance of any organization. Effective governance tenets encompass the basic characteristics and behaviors that enable governance team members to effectively create a climate for excellence in a school district and maintain the focus on improved student learning and achievement. This governance handbook is organized around these four dimensions.

They are:

1. Unity of Purpose: Governing as a unified team with a common vision
2. Roles and Responsibilities: Understanding the role and responsibilities of the board and the superintendent
3. Creating and sustaining a positive governance culture (norms)
4. Procedures to Facilitate Governance Leadership (protocols) –CSBA

UNITY OF PURPOSE

Unity of purpose includes a common focus, priority goals, and the values and beliefs governance team members share about children, the district and public education that help to transcend individual differences and fulfill a greater purpose. –CSBA

Summerville Union High School District Core Values:

Improving Student Learning – Teamwork – Respect – Professionalism

Why Public Education Is Important:

- Public education provides equal opportunities for all students and their needs
- Our goal is to provide an excellent education through innovative teaching and learning
- Preparing students for college, career, and life

What We Believe About School Boards:

- School board members are elected by the community and represent the community in the oversight of district schools
- Board members are the eyes and ears of the community
- The board is responsible for taking care of the public's tax dollars
- Boards are charged with responsibly managing school bonds and other district resources

- The community entrusts its children to this school district
- The board drives the district to be world class
- The board provides a focus on goals for the entire district
- The opportunity to develop the district’s potential is NOW!

Why We Want to Serve on This Governance Team:

- The school board provides citizen oversight of the public schools—can’t have a school district without a school board
- The superintendent is responsible for implementing the decisions of the board.
- The board protects the public’s interest in the public schools
- The governance team protects the students’ interests and make sure they have the best learning environment and educational opportunities possible.
- Each member of the governance team brings unique skills, perspectives and experiences to the team.
- Our primary responsibility is to prepare our kids for their next step in life.

Our Beliefs About Our Students:

- Our students are our future
- Every student should be challenged to their potential
- Students should have as many opportunities as possible to be successful
- We want our students to feel physically and emotionally safe at school.
- Students have to become critical thinkers and problem-solvers in order to be successful
- Students need to have the motivation and drive to become educated citizens

Summerville Union HSD Governance Team Priorities:

(A complete list of all of the items and goals considered is in Appendix A)

GOVERNANCE ROLES

There are important distinctions to be made between the board's role and that of the superintendent and staff. All board members are equal under the law, and authority rests with the board as a whole. Direction is given to the superintendent only at board meetings through actions taken by the board. Just as board members should govern and not manage a school district, superintendents should not administer a district in isolation from the representatives whom the public has entrusted with the schools. School board "trustees" are the representatives of the people, elected to ensure that a community's schools educate the community's children in accordance with the wishes of the local community.

It is important to understand and respect the separate roles of the board and superintendent, yet work together as a "governance team" taking collective responsibility for building unity and creating a positive organizational culture. –CSBA

Policies that define the role and responsibilities of the superintendent:

BP 2000: Administration Concepts and Roles

BP 2110: Responsibilities of the Superintendent (*This policy is not in the SUHSD Policy Manual*)

Bylaws that define the role and responsibilities of the board:

BB 9000: Role of the Board

BB 9200: Limits of Board Member Authority

A Discussion of the Role and Responsibilities of the Board and Superintendent:

The Role of the Board:

The board represents and protects the public interest in the public schools. The board as a whole is the authority over the district, and board members have no individual authority. Board members shall hold the education of students above any partisan principle, group interest, or personal interest.

The Board's Responsibilities are to:

Govern the district

Establish policies

Set the direction for the district

Provide financial oversight

Perform executive and judicial functions

Hold the school system accountable on behalf of the community

Provide support to the superintendent, staff and students

The Role of the Superintendent:

The superintendent is the chief administrative officer for the district. The superintendent shapes the district culture, inspires community confidence, encourages positive relationships, and provides supporting information for good board decisions.

The Duties and Responsibilities of the Superintendent are to:

Implement all board decisions

Manage all day-to-day operations of the district

Be accountable to the Board of Education

Delegate district responsibilities to district employees

PERFORMING GOVERNANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

California School Boards Association defines the five responsibilities of school boards as:

1. *Setting the direction for the community's schools by...*

- Focusing on student learning
- Assessing needs/ obtain baseline data
- Generating, reviewing or revising setting direction documents (beliefs, vision, priorities, strategic goals, success indicators)
- Ensuring an appropriate inclusive process is used
- Ensuring these documents are the driving force for all district efforts

2. *Establishing an effective and efficient structure for the school district by...*

- Employing and supporting the superintendent; set policy for hiring of other personnel
- Overseeing the development of and adopt policies
- Setting a direction for and adopt the curriculum
- Establishing budget priorities, adopt the budget and oversee facilities issues
- Providing direction for and voting to accept collective bargaining agreements

3. *Providing support through our behavior and actions by...*

- Acting with professional demeanor that models the district's beliefs and vision
- Making decisions and provide resources that support mutually agreed upon priorities and goals
- Upholding district policies the board has approved
- Ensuring a positive working climate exists
- Being knowledgeable about district efforts

4. *Ensuring accountability to the public by...*

- Evaluating the superintendent
- Monitoring, reviewing and revising policies, and serving as a judicial and appeals body
- Monitoring student achievement and program effectiveness and requiring program changes as indicated
- Monitoring and adjusting district finances as necessary
- Monitoring the collective bargaining process
- Developing and implementing board self-evaluation

5. *Demonstrating community leadership*

- Speaking with a common voice about district priorities, goals and issues
- Engaging and involving the community in district schools and activities
- Communicating clear information about policies, programs and fiscal condition
- Educating the community and the media about the issues facing the district and public education
- Advocating for students, district programs and public education to the general public, the community, and local, state and national leaders

–CSBA

POSITIVE GOVERNANCE CULTURE (norms)

The community elects school board members to set and monitor the direction of the school district, and the district superintendent translates all efforts into action. To be effective, it is vital that the board and superintendent have a respectful and productive working relationship based on trust and open communications.

Summerville Union HSD Meeting Guidelines

(The following are the guidelines followed during the July 9, 2013 Governance Leadership workshop.)

We agree to...

- Keep our focus on the best interests of our students
- Communicate respectfully, openly and honestly with all members
- Work toward the future, learning from the past
- Work as a team, respecting each other's opinions and differences
- Each take responsibility for the work of the team
- Make sure there are no hidden agendas – deal with all issues and concerns openly
- Keep all team discussions confidential
- Stay focused on our goals and avoid getting sidetracked

Board and Superintendent Communication

The board and superintendent agreed to develop a process for open, two-way communication. The intent of this communication process is to create a team that has healthy and effective dynamics that allow the board and superintendent to work together to develop a highly functioning governance team.

- The superintendent will provide a Monday report to the board each week keeping board members informed of district activities, district progress toward goals, and other issues that board members need to know about.
- The board and superintendent agreed to operate in an environment of “no surprises” with each other:
 - Board members will contact the superintendent if they have any personal concerns, and if they have any other issues about the district that need to be shared with him.
 - The superintendent will contact individual board members if he has personal concerns, or if he has any issues about the district that need to be shared with the board.

SUPPORTIVE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES & PROCESSES (protocols)

To effectively meet district challenges, the board and superintendent must function together as a governance leadership team. The following protocols were developed to support and promote the effectiveness of the governance team and to ensure a positive and productive working relationship among board members, the superintendent, district staff, students, and the community. The protocols were developed for and by the members of the governance team, and may be modified over time as needed. –CSBA

Protocols to Facilitate Governance Leadership

Topic	Responding to Complaints or Concerns from Staff or Community Members
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Board members should be responsive to staff and members of the community.</i> • <i>Board members do not have authority to resolve problems or concerns.</i> • <i>Board members need to respect the professional staff that is charged with the responsibility of resolving concern or complaints according to district policies.</i>
Protocol	<p><i>We agree to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen openly, and clarify for understanding, being careful to remain neutral. • Remind the staff or community member that an individual trustee does not have authority to resolve issues. • Encourage the person to address the situation with the person who can most directly help them with their concern. (teacher, principal) • Notify the superintendent about the conversation. • The superintendent will follow through and inform trustees about resolution of the issue, as appropriate

Topic	Reports to the Board
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Board members need sufficient information to make informed decisions on behalf of the community.</i> • <i>The board has a responsibility to understand and be able to explain district progress toward the achievement of district goals.</i> • <i>The board must feel competent to address significant issues or topics that are facing the district to the staff and out in the community.</i>
Protocol	<p><i>We agree:</i></p> <p>Reports to the Board of Education, (for example reports on progress toward district goals or on issues of significance to the district and/or community), should include information that briefly describes the following topics as appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background and history of the topic • Relevant facts, data and information about the topic – and to support the recommendation • The process that was followed • People who were involved in the development of the recommended plan or action • People who will be affected by the plan or action • Stakeholder interests • Important aspects of the staff action plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Necessary resources (people, cost, facilities, materials, etc.) – Who will be involved in the implementation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Timelines - with the end point - Intended results / outcomes • Options/alternatives that were considered • Recommendation of the superintendent with the rationale for the recommendation
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Topic	“No” Votes
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Trustees respect the right of other trustees to vote “no” on an issue.</i> • <i>The board values open and honest communication so that the governance team culture remains positive.</i> • <i>It is important that everyone in the district understands that board decisions are based on thoughtful consideration of information, and thorough discussion of the issues.</i>
Protocol	<p>We agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a board member is voting no on an issue he or she may explain the reason.

Topic	Bringing up New Ideas
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>New ideas and new concepts are critical to moving the district forward.</i> • <i>New ideas must support the adopted district vision, priorities and goals.</i> • <i>Board members must be mindful of the impact of new ideas on district resources (time, finances, people, existing action plans, etc.)</i> • <i>New ideas must ultimately represent the collective direction of the board in order to be implemented by the superintendent.</i>
Protocol	<p>We agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustees will surface new ideas in the future board items section at board meetings. • Trustees will ask that new ideas be placed on the board agenda for information first. • The board will decide collectively whether to move an idea forward for action. • The will determine a process for evaluating new ideas and establishing a timeline for further study and input while being mindful of district resources and maintaining the focus on the district vision, priorities and goals

Topic	Visiting Schools
Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Visiting schools reminds us that the students and learning are our primary focus.</i> • <i>Board members wish to demonstrate respect for the learning and working environment of the school, and not disrupt the school environment.</i> • <i>The board respects the busy schedule of staff and the anxiety that can be created by well-meaning, but unannounced visits to school sites and/or to committee meetings.</i> • <i>It is important to follow a consistent process that is respectful of both staff and board member time.</i>
Protocol	<p>We agree:</p> <p>To schedule a site visit board members will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stop at the office to pick-up a visitors pass and to sign-in; • follow the school’s procedure for visitors; • reduce anxiety by avoiding frequent visits to the same classrooms

- board members may ask staff members questions about opportunities they see, challenges they are facing, and the things they are proud of at the school and or about the work they are doing
- the focus of discussions should be on progress toward district goals

Responding to staff member or parent concerns or complaints:

- We will follow our protocol for responding to staff or community member concerns or complaints
- We will report any personal concerns we have to the superintendent.

APPENDIX A

2017-2018 SUHSD Board Goals

1. Increase student learning for all SUHSD students.
 - Increase “meets” and “exceeds” scores in Math and ELA on the CAASPP for 2017.
 - Implement a specific SST process for at risk students. Present to the Board in October 2017.
 - Evaluate the BYU credit recovery program and if successful, consider additional applications to support at risk students. Report progress to the Board by November 2017.
 - Assess the use of study skills courses. Evaluate alternative sections of courses that can support students academically and/or provide viable options. Report to the Board November 2017.
 - Consider attendance incentive options and implement a more robust incentive program by November 2017.
 - Recalculate the curriculum and grading used in math and language support courses. Investigate and implement best practices for these courses. Report practices in place to the Board by December 2017.
 - Update district wide homework policy. Report to the Board in September 2017.
 - Establish a district wide tool kit for instructional strategies in the classroom. Report efforts to improve RTI and instructional strategies of at-risk students to the board by December 2017.
2. Recruit, hire, and support highly qualified staff members.
 - Provide a minimum of three staff wide instructional technology professional development opportunities. Provide a professional development report to the Board by February 2018.
 - Support students through quality instruction that emphasizes classroom based support strategies. Provide professional development in the practice of supporting at risk students in the classroom by providing a minimum of three staff wide instructional strategies session for at risk students. Provide a professional development report to the Board by February 2018.
3. Proposed new goal: Maintain and apply financial practices for the district that preserves a positive financial standing in support of student learning.

- Provide the Board with information for decisions and oversight on budgets issues, staffing, maintenance and operations. Report to the Board in a timely manner first and second interim reports; updates on enrollment and staffing; conduct spring board budget workshop; meet all LCAP timeline benchmarks and compliance issues; provide information on the governor's budget proposals; afford the board opportunity for input on annual budget development and adoption.
4. Develop and implement District plan to maintain and improve facilities.
- Update the five-year plan and present to the Board by December 1, 2017.
 - Report to the Board regularly on project progress, summer maintenance plans, and progress toward long term plans.
5. Implement communication practices that create trust and integrity, including providing all members of the Board with equal access to information and recognizing the importance of both responsive and anticipatory communications. (BP 2111 (B)). Emphasize open communication through all segments of the District.
- Review with the Board progress on goals in December and May of the school year.
 - Accentuate a problem solving approach throughout the district; with the board, administration, teachers, classified staff, students, and parents. Emphasize clear communication and safe conversations.

Board Adopted: June 28, 2017

APPENDIX B

Summerville Union High School District Vision * Mission * Beliefs

Vision: Preparing students for college, career, and life.

Mission: Committed to excellence through innovative teaching and learning. Inspiring and empowering all students by providing the tools they need to be prepared for their future in an ever changing world.

We Believe...

- Every student can learn.
- In building a highly qualified and motivated staff with high expectations.
- It is our responsibility to provide every student with challenging and rigorous experiences so that they can become critical thinkers and problem solvers.
- In continually improving all aspects of the organization.
- In sound financial planning to achieve district goals.
- In doing what is best for all students.
- In engaging in and adapting to modern technology to prepare all students for their futures.
- That a clean, safe, healthy, and nurturing environment is essential for learning.
- All students should be engaged and academically challenged while accepting the responsibility for their learning.
- In co-curricular/extracurricular activities to enhance student development.
- Teamwork is vital for students, staff, and the school community in support of student learning.

Board Adopted: October 8, 2014